Varanasi route, it was operative upto 25.3.2006 to cater to the tourist traffic. The flights will again resume from 1st October, 2006 to cater to seasonal traffic. Indian airlines is currently operating a daily flight on Mumbai-Delhi Varanasi sector.

**National Civil Aviation Grid**

3964. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up National Civil Aviation Grid; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

**Expansion of Patna Airport**

†3965. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL. Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that since Patna airport does not have required lenght of runway which leads to technical difficulties in landing and take-off in summer season;

(b) whether it is also a fact that having considered the possibility of increasing the length of the Patna airport, a couple of years back, the Ministry had prepared a plan which has not yet materialised; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The physical runway length at Patna airport is 7500 feet and usable length is 6400 feet due to the presence of obstacles (Trees and other obstructions) in the approach path resulting in aircraft operating with load penalty.

A proposal for changing the orientation of the present runway was explored by Airports Authority of India in November, 2000 to facilitate

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.